

FINDING VOIDS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

The paper reviews the prominent literature on aggregates of human development with specific reference to India. The early work on human development related to Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI) was to measure the status of poverty vs. well-being in developing economies and emphasized on income to specify development. It was noted to be too narrow a concept. Later the official reports of human development emphasized on widening the range of human choice to cover the full flourishing of all human capabilities. Income generation is noted to be necessary but it is not sum total of human life. The subsequent Human Development Reports broadened the scope of human development by including global dimensions of human development and the power of globalization to bring economic and social benefits, people's participation as the central theme of development, human security, human poverty, empowerment of women and a global strategy to this end, and development as human rights. There are many areas in the human development which require in depth investigation like planning, financing, managing and measuring human development wastages, and imbalances in the social sector, inter-sectoral and intra-sectoral priorities.

Introduction

The present article reviews the literature on human development and tries to highlight the gaps that need to be filled up. The concept of human development is of recent one, though its contents and interest in it are not new. It is reflected explicitly in the writings of the early founders of quantitative economics (such as William Petty, Gregory King, Francois Quesnay, Antoine Lavoisier, and Joseph Lagrange) as well as in the studies of political economy (such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo,

Robert Malthus, Karl Marx, and John Stuart Mill). In the segregated form, the concept of Human Development takes reference to education, health, water supply and sanitation, housing, food and nutrition, income and employment, environment, demography, social security, and political freedom. In aggregate, these are referred as human development. These not only provide the range of human choice – but also the framework within which the later has to be exercised. Whereas enough

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of literature is available on segregated components, information is lacking in respect of aggregate of it. It is not proposed to review the literature on the segregated components, however, the article takes reference to available information on human development, both in India and abroad and reviews it.

Early Emphasis

Though the concept of human development, both in contents and emphasis, may not be considered as new to human kind, in essence, it is a way of life that lead to individual development in both the physical and spiritual domain; the current emphasis on it began with the publication of official reports on human development by the United Nations since 1990's. The UNDP's earlier work relates to study on basic needs (for instance, **Pigou 1952, ILO 1976, Streeton et al 1981**) and on the quality of life (for instance **Sen 1973, Adman 1975, Grant 1978, and Morris 1979**), though the focus in such work is more integrated and less ad-hoc in the context of human development.

In recent past, the noble prize winning economist **Arthur Lewis** defined the purpose of development as widening the range of human choice – as did the first Human Development Report in 1990. Whereas Lewis tended to equate wide choice merely with greater income, and had faith that economic growth would inevitably lead to human development. The concept of human development as would be noted later goes far beyond income and growth to cover the full flourishing of all human capabilities. In 1979 **Morris David Morris** came out with a Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI) to measure the status of poverty vs. well – being in developing economies, especially India. Morris argued that income comparisons between nations, and between regions in the same notion were flawed in that they did not indicate the level of satisfaction or quality of

life derived from income. His argument was not that income was too wide a concept to specify development. Instead, he argued that it was too narrow to encompass the outcomes of choice and constraints for individuals, communities, and nations. Morris and other critics argued that the cross national income comparison derived from GDP to population ratio was not relevant for measuring the conditions of world's poor. It does not reflect the position of the weaker section of the society. It reflected income as an input rather than a developmental out come. Development strategies, therefore, required new indices to understand better the impact of developmental outlay upon society. One such index in Human Development Index (HDI). Income generation is necessary, but it is not the sum total of human life. A comparison of income and human development level in various countries shows the extent to which income and economic growth have been actually translated into human life, though there is no automatic link between growth and development.

In 1993 **Barbara Brighan** explored the interaction between the early concern of development economics (for growth, structural changes, modernization and the like) and the new issues which the discipline was called upon to address.. In particular, the emphasis was placed in the new issues on the meaning of development in the context of economic history, industrialization, and modernization.

Studies Recalled and Voids

The First Human Development report of UNDP published in 1990 (under the inspiration and leadership of its architect **Mehbub-ul-Haq**) analyzed the record of human development for the last three decades and experiences of fourteen countries in managing economic growth and human development. In one of his basis work **Haq** analyzed the development thinking in recent decades and pointed out

which is widely accepted today, that the real purpose of development is to enlarge peoples' choices in all fields – economic, political and cultural. Seeking increase in income is one of the many choices people make, but not the only one. Similar attempts to trace the history of human development were made by **Manfred Max – Neef, Antonio Elizalde and Martin Hopenhayen** in their work on human scale development: an option for the future.

The real wealth of a nation is its people and the purpose of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative life. This simple but powerful truth is emphasized in the report (HDR 1990) which is often forgotten in the pursuit of material and financial wealth. These were the opening comments of first Human Development Report. The tenth Human Development Report 1999 like the first and other previous reports was also about the people. It was mainly about the growing inter dependence of people in today's globalizing world: **Wheeler** in his study also argued the basis of any development policy and planning during 21st century to be the people.

The combined effect of various components of human development is reflected through Human Development Index (HDI). It is an attempt to measure countries achievement in the enhancement of human development. The measure has been appreciated as well as criticized for its attempt. As a result, the Human Development Index has been subject to changes and improvement in subsequent reports of UNDP and studies by individual researchers. The main criticism is that the weighing in the index is arbitrary. Complaints have also been voiced against the data underlying the social indicators, and therefore, the HDI is said to be unreliable. But the same critique often add the complain that the data is also very scarce. In defense of

the index it can be said that it does catch the eye and for simple presentation is better than long list of separate indicators. In the Indian context UNDP's Human Development Index has been subject to wide discussions and modifications in the Human Development Report of Madhya Pradesh. The report is noted to have made significant contributions in Human Development Index. The suitability of HDI for assessing health and nutritional status is examined by **Grace Maria Antony, K Visweswara Rao, and N Balakrishna** in the Indian context. **Parikh (1995), Sudershan (1994), Prabhu and Chatterjee (1993), and Chandrashekhar (1993)** have emphasized on environmental sustainability along with compulsory primary education, access to facilities in terms of social sector spending, namely health, education and nutrition respectively, to be taken care of in the formulation of HDI.

Lack of economic resources is often invoked to justify the lack of progress in achieving human development but the link between economic resources and human development is far more complex – by no means automatic. Resource distribution factors or allocation policies mediate the effect of wealth in a country regarding social welfare and human development goals. Thus the distributional shares and resource allocation shares strategies become the central focus of development programs. In the study by **Rao**, the allocation issue is important because it is going to be quit difficult to raise additional domestic resources for human development purposes. The 1990 report suggested a sustainable development along with active popular NGOs participation for successful human development. It defined human development as a process of enlarging people's choices at all levels of development. The three essentials are to lead a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge, and to have access to resources

needed for a decent standard of living. If these essential choices are not available, many other opportunities remain inaccessible.

Human Development has two sides : The formation of human capabilities – such as improved health, knowledge and skills – and, the use people make of acquired capabilities for leisure, productive purposes and for social and political affairs. The capability approach does not deny the instrumental importance of income growth; but it does deny its relevance as an end itself; it sees the basic goal of development as the enhancement of the capability to live a long, healthy and active life. It is noted that countries initially favoring economic growth without emphasis on human development lapsed into vicious circle while those with good human development, and relatively poor economic growth moved into virtuous categories. Human Development has recently been advanced as the ultimate objectives of human activity in place of economic growth. Today there is wide recognition that in many areas of activity, development can best be insured by freeing them from unnecessary controls and state interventions. Human development in all its facets was the ultimate goal of eighth five year plan in India. The plan recognized human development as the core of all development efforts. The ninth five year plan also continued to pursue such goals.

In 1989, **Mehub-Ul-Haq** creator of the concept of human development suggested the increasing role United Nations agencies can play in encouraging and sustaining human development in the global context. Haq suggested empirical research on measuring human development and questioning of military expense as some of the initiatives. United Nations system can help implement – he concluded that it is possible to achieve fairly respectable levels of human development even

at modest level of GNP per capita. In 1999 **Paul Streeton** in one of his articles analyzed and suggested how UN agencies and other international and regional organization could become more responsive to the demand and needs of global civil society in respect of development.

Larger attention to human development goals in the final analysis require considerable restructuring of the existing budget priorities in the developing countries. The Human Development Report 1991, points out to enormous potential to restructuring both national budget and international and allocation in favor of human development. **Anthony Clunis** in one of his study points out possible ways of obtaining and safeguarding resources for human development. The researcher also suggested a case for an international organization to further the cause of human development. Developing countries might tap resources without recourse to international aid for human development but at several points international cooperation and coordination are essential. While shaving similar concern for human development in India, Haq analyzed in his study on Human Development in India not only Asian profile, and agendas for action, but suggested a human development strategy for India.

While the Human Development Report 1990 emphasized the concept, the components and the parameters of human development, the subsequent reports have central theme which broaden the premises of human development. The HDR 1991 points out to an enormous potential to structuring budgetary provisions in favor of human development. The Human Development Report 1992 focuses on the global dimensions of human development i.e. the use of global markets for the benefit of all nations and all people. The report attempts to place global market in proper perspective,

and analyzes it from a human development perspective. In this context it would not be out of place to review the Human Development Report 1999 (dedicated to the memory of late Mehabub-Ul-Haq) which was in favor of power of globalization to bring economic and social benefits to societies. The 1999 Report also championed the agenda of the world's weak and those marginalized, and calls for a much bolder agenda of global and national reforms to achieve globalization with human face. The report presumes that global market, global technology, global ideas and global solidarity can enrich the lives of people everywhere greatly expanding their choices

The Human Development Report 1993 had people's participation as the central theme identifying three major means of participation i.e. people's friendliness, perfectly competitive market, and decentralization of power and community of organization in human development programs. The implications of widespread participation are profound – embracing every aspect of development – markets need to be reformed to offer everyone access to the benefits they can bring; governance need to be decentralized to permit greater access to decision making; and community organization need to be allowed to exert greater influence. The 1993 report explores these themes.

Enlarging the concept, the Human Development Report 1994 mainly focused on human security. In all its ramifications, it sought to ensure universal primary education, primary health care, safe drinking water and sanitation facility, optimum nutritional level and provision for self employment opportunities. The contribution by **K. Srinivasan, Wasim A Zaman and Abu Saleh Shariff** in their work in India: Towards Population and Development Goals analyzed the ramifications in the Indian context with specific reference to health, literacy and

education, growth and disparity. The study presents recent trends in key demographic, social, and economic indicators as parameters of growth for India as a whole. The study also attempted to compute Human Development India for the major states of India and the country as a whole. In 1999 **Abusaleh Shaiff** came out with a Biographical Information and Organizational Role Stress analyzing a profile of Indian states in 1990's. The report focuses attention on poverty and relative income and asset distribution, household expenditure and food security, literacy and education, health, morbidity and disability and village level infrastructural facilities for human development in India.

The 1995 Human Development Report had its main theme improvement of women, and suggested a global strategy to this end. It observed that history is likely to judge the progress in the next millennium by one major yardstick i.e., is there a growing equality of opportunity between people and the nation? The report emphasized on reducing gender disparity, in order to prevent the endangering of human development, the central message of the report is very clear i.e., human development must be engendered. The report also evolves by way of innovation a Gender Related Index (**GDI**) which measures disparities in basic human capabilities.

The Human Development Report, 1996 explores the complex relationship between growth and human development, and tries to establish long term linkage between economic growth and development. "To quote the report human development is treated as the end, growth as a means". It identifies categorily three parameters: equality of opportunity, sustainability of it, and empowerment of people, as essential though not exhaustive for choices at all levels of development. The 1997 Human Development Report drew attention towards

human poverty reflecting not merely on low income, but on poor health and education, deprivation in knowledge and communication, inability to exercise human and political rights, and absence of dignity, confidence and self-respect. Introducing Human Poverty Index (HPI), it considered human poverty more than income poverty – it is the denial of choices and opportunities for living a tolerable life. Though the HPI has weaknesses in data and in concept, yet it makes a useful addition to the measurement of poverty. The human poverty was considered as the denial of human rights.

From peoples' perspective, consumption is a means to human development. Its significance lies in enlarging peoples' capabilities to live long and to live well. Consumption opens opportunities without which a person could be left in human poverty. The 1998 Human Development Report examines consumption from the perspective of human development. HPI – I was evolved in 1997, HPI – II evolved in 1998 report reflects inequalities in consumption, and suggests agenda for action by ensuring with minimum consumption requirement for all as an explicit policy objective in all countries.

Access to basic education, health care, shelter and employment are as critical to human freedom as political and civil rights are. The time has come for a study and report which draws out the complex relationship between human development and human rights. The Human Development Report 2000 draws our attention to such a relationship. Similar such relationships were also highlighted in 1994 by **Klemens Van De Sand** in his study on Human Rights as precondition for development. Human Rights and Human Development share a common vision and purpose i.e., to secure freedom, well-being and dignity of all people every where. Humane development is considered essential for realizing human rights,

and human rights are essential for full human development. The report (HDR, 2000) points out the need for a global change in attitude for a positive support in favor of human rights in place of punitive approaches. It points out six elements in policy decisions that are central to realizing human rights. These are pursuing pro-economic growth policies, restructuring budget, protecting environmental resources, removing discrimination, and securing human rights in law.

In *Development with Human Face*, by **Mehrotra and Jolly**, similar issues have been raised. Why social indicators continued to grow through the 80's and 90's despite economic decline was due to adjustment policies which seem to affect social input indicators more than output or outcome indicators. Significant advances have been made in the preceding two decades especially in creating a social infrastructure – health, clinics, schools, rural roads, and so on and a strong upward tendency in social outcome indicators had come to exist.

The 12th Annual Report of UNDP (HDR 2001) focuses on making new technologies work human development. The report argues that new technologies are a key to reducing world poverty, and calls for increased public funding of researches in medicine, agriculture, information and communication, and energy sectors. It evolved a Technology Achievement Index (TAI) and clarifies that it, instead of being a measure of a country's progress in global technology, is aimed at assessing the creation and diffusion of technology. The report analyzed how the uneven diffusion of technology world over adversely affects the human development.

In one of his studies *Implementing Human Development Strategy*, Griffin has treated human development as partly about changing

spending priorities not between public and private sectors but within the public sector itself. In most developing countries much can be done to promote human development by reallocating government expenditure without the need to raise additional revenue through taxation. The study not only analyzes essential features of human development strategy but also talks of structure of incentives, reallocation of public sector resources, and a set of structural reforms in terms of employment, financing the programme, and distributing its benefits.

In India, **Srinivasan and Shariff (1997)** have examined human development in the context of their study on demography, social, and economic indicators for the country. The study undertook a situational analysis of various facets of Indian society, keeping in view the goals set by the ICPD held in September 1994 in Cairo. An attempt has been made to comprehensively analyze the major Indian states in terms of HDI, GHI, and RHI. The Kerala Model of human development was analyzed by **T. N. Krishnan** in his study – the Root to Social Development in Kerala. The study analyzed the relationship between social development and economic growth. The significance of the study becomes obvious only in the context of comparative setting. Another important piece of literature on human development in India is the report of Madhya Pradesh Govt. on human development. Though the report takes reference to Indian Context, it mainly focuses attention on district level data on peoples' well being as well as deprivation, vis-à-vis health and livelihood in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

The **NCAER Report (1996)** on human development – profile of India, interstate and inter group differential was a culmination of four years of intensive work of NCAER which conducted a multi – purpose survey of 33,000 rural households in India in 1994. The report

presented the indicators highlighting both direct income and assets, and various indirect dimensions of prosperity such as employment and wage stability, dependency ratio, and consumption expenditure. It also dealt with health, morbidity, disability and under nutrition. The volume II of the report which was noted to be a draft one is nothing but a compilation of statistical tables dealing with income, expenditure, and social sector indicators of household in rural and urban India. **Chakravorty and Pal's Study (1995)** on Human Development Profile is more or less a study on human development on the pattern of NCAER. In his study on public expenditure on human development in India, **Tapas Kumar** examined the expenditure pattern in respect of provision of basic human needs, steps to contain poverty, and development potential for income generation by target groups. The Human Development in India by **J. C. Aggarwal** is nothing but a compilation of statistical data on diverse aspects and dimension of human development in States and Union territories.

Prayag Mehta in his study treated human development as the duty of the state, which has been criticized by western development economist. Inferentially, it becomes right of the citizen – Constitutionally not providing for it becomes the denial of it. The UNDP human development report, 1996 have also argued that economic growth promotes human development, if public action is directed vigorously to ameliorating growth and distributing it benefits. Hence, concerted public action is needed for human development. The Study by Mehta also describes behavioral tendencies in states functioning and in management of programs in respect of human development. It also discussed the role of bureaucracy, structural and behavioral changes needed, and the need for effective state intervention and public activism in human development in India.

Potential For Research

A review of above literature both in India and abroad reveal coverage of various aspects of human development both in aggregate as well as in segregate. However, the financing of the expenditure involved in human development activities is one such area where enough attention is not paid. Empirical researches on it are lacking. It is one such area where the U.N. System can help implement the required research. Attention to human development goals in the final analysis require considerable restructuring of the existing budget priorities in the developing countries including India. In country after country, too much is spent on Universities, instead of basic education; on urban hospitals instead of health care; on new buildings and administrative structure, instead of securing expenditure to run existing facilities. There is accumulating evidence of wasted investment. There are inefficiencies and leakage's in managing investment budget, showing considerable scope for improvement. The greatest imbalance is in between military and social expenditure. In fact rising military expenditure in third world have not attracted the attention they should have. For financing purposes, the reallocation issue is important because it is going to be quite difficult to raise additional domestic resources or to obtain more foreign assistance support without first sharing the willingness and the ability to harness existing resources effectively for human development. To quote Haq, "there are many areas in the human development which require in depth empirical researches. These concern planning, financing managing, and measuring human development." Empirical researches must test the hypothesis - whether social services tend to get distributed in favor of high income group: if this is correct, it shows considerable room for improving the lot of the poor by restructuring existing distribution

of social expenditure. Again, there is need for more researches on wastage's and imbalances in social sector to understand the potential for revamping of existing inter - sectoral and intra-sectoral priorities. The policy pay-off from such empirical researches is likely to be very large.

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Appendix A
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT MATRIX

Activities ↓ Elements	Basic Choices						Additional Choices			
	Knowledge	Longevity	Standard of Living			Housing	Environment	Social Security and Freedom	Political Freedom	
			Income and Employment	Food and Nutrition	Health, Water Supply and Sanitation					
People (as individuals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and Training Type of education Level of education Skill formation and acquisition of capabilities Per capita expenditure on education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demography Ambition towards multiplication in numbers Dependency Ratio Family Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to income/employment Distribution of income Standard of living Job security Per capita income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per capita availability of food grains Nourishment Minimum needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Care / Utilization Health Security Safe Drinking Water Chlorine Ammonia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water People's involvement in Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Protection Quality of Life Consequences of Environmental Neglect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Welfare Coverage of the Social and Welfare Schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Dignity and Freedom Right to franchise Personal Security and Liberty Equality of Opportunity 	
Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy Programs Schooling of Children Adult Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family planning and welfare 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household with Access to Basic Health Care Ammonia Family Welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Society involvement Reduction Disparities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orniting NGO's to Environmental Problems Prevention and Control of Pollution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family System Pattern of Family Growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-Dependence of People Public education Self Government Freedom from Discrimination 	
State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational / Technical / Professional Education Higher Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing Rob 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour Market Level and Intensity of Poverty Employment Stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Distribution System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health and Sanitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Schemes Housing Finance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing Institutional base for Environmental Protection Forest Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulating and Implementing Role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organs Profile of Public Functionaries Injustice and Violation of the Rule of Law 	
Inter-state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-state Variation and Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-state Variation and Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-state Variation and Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-state Variation and Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-state Variation and Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-state Variation and Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-state Variation and Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-state Variation and Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-state Variation and Comparison 	
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate of Literacy Policy on Education Science and Technology Expenditure on Education (as Percentage of GDP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Size and growth of population Life expectancy Population policy Action programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Growth and its sustainability Distribution of Income Labour force, and Worker's Participation Plan Policy on employment Inflation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Production / Food Supply Food Security Expenditure on food Production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Health Policy Expenditure on Health, Sanitation and Water Supply (as Percentage of GDP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National policy on Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Statement on Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Policy on Social Security and Welfare Social Freedom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political Process and Structural Adjustment Legal frame work Govt. feasibility Administrative reforms Political Commitment to Human Development Governance of People - Crisis and Quality, Measure of Governance - Human Governance Index (HGI) Social Cost of Governance 	
International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid allocation and institutional support by international agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overseas debt Terms of Trade Global Market and Efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Imports / Expenditure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid Allocation International Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment by international agencies / Non-residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support from International Agencies to Protect Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional Support for Social Welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pattern of National / Global Governance and Human Development 	